

# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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TOWARDS ZERO POLLUTION

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## Are edible insects sustainable? A consumer perspective

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### Abstract

Edible insects (EI) have been presented as an alternative source of protein food of animal origin, with a lower environmental impact as compared to other sources of animal protein for human consumption. Therefore, increasing its consumption can help to reduce the impact of the food systems on the natural ecosystems. However, the consumption of insects or insect based foods is still faced as a challenge in societies where they are not part of the traditional food habits. This research was carried out in 14 countries simultaneously, by means of a questionnaire survey. A total of 7221 valid answers were obtained for participants from Brazil, Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey. The results indicated that the perception of the participants is that EI are a more sustainable alternative when compared with other sources of animal protein (31% agree and 20% strongly agree), release less greenhouse gases (31% agree and 25% strongly agree) and require less feed than beef production (33% agree and 23% strongly agree). Also, the participants believe that the ecological footprint of insects is smaller when compared to other animal proteins (32% agree and 19% strongly agree), and that EI can possibly respond to the growing world demand for protein (35% agree and 23% strongly agree). In conclusion, the participants in the study appear to have a favorable opinion about EI as a more sustainable food.

### Keywords

Edible insects; sustainable food; ecological footprint; consumers' perception.